

July 13, 2010

UTILITIES COMMISSION

July 13, 2010

7:00 p.m.

The Stafford County Utilities Commission met for its regular meeting on July 13, 2010, in the A, B, C Conference Room in the Stafford County Administration Center. Commission members present were Steven Apicella, Lloyd Chittum, Bob Gibbons, Danny Kim, Bill Tignor and Clarence Young. Harry Critzer, Dale Allen, Susan Fitzgibbon, Cheryl Giles and Mike Smith were present for the Utilities Department.

Public Presentations – Mr. Paul Waldowski commented he had researched information about the process the developer took to provide water and sewer service for the Stafford Meadows subdivision. Mr. Waldowski stated he feels the developers may not have been educated about the options they should have taken to implement water and sewer services for the subdivision. Mr. Waldowski remarked that he would like to see the issue of the maintenance of water and sewer lines for the Stafford Meadows subdivision addressed.

Approval of Minutes – The minutes for the May 11, 2010 meeting were approved as written.

Commission Members' Comments – Mr. Gibbons asked for clarification on the maximum amount of membranes that could be used at the Rocky Pen Run Water Treatment Facility. Harry responded that 25 mgd of membranes would be the maximum. Mr. Allen responded an extensive safe yield analysis was done based upon the permit conditions and historical river flow information. The safe yield of the reservoir is determined based upon when we can or cannot pump and what withdrawal rate we can take from the reservoir. The calculated safe yield of the reservoir is being recalculated based on new information, but will probably be around 12 mgd.

Director's Report – Mr. Critzer reported the following items:

- ♣ Malcolm Pirnie is scheduled to complete an Odor Assessment & Control Study for the Falls Run PS and Falmouth bottom area July 20-22.
- ♣ There was an increase of paid water and sewer availabilities prior to the July 1st fee increase. There were 223 paid water availabilities and 81 paid sewer availabilities received in June. Water availabilities had a 77% increase over FY2009 and sewer availabilities had a 50% increase over FY2009.
- ♣ An agreement with DEQ for Little Falls Run has been reached. The agreement will allow Utilities to postpone the \$5M Phase II upgrades without the risk of losing our poundage allocations for nitrogen and phosphorus.
- ♣ Susan Fitzgibbon, Utilities Financial Manager submitted her letter of resignation. Her last day with the Utilities Department will be July 30th.
- ♣ Per Mr. Gibbons e-mail regarding the comparison of water demand for 2002, 2007 and 2010, Mr. Critzer reported that the water demand for 2010 is lower than the water demand for 2007. The reservoir levels for Abel Lake and Smith Lake were lower in 2002 than in 2007 or 2010. Based upon the water module used, it was determined that an estimated 174 days of usable water remains if water demands continue at the average of the last 30 days. The current water use restriction level would be voluntary odd/even watering. Staff will continue to monitor water levels for the next few days before making a decision to recommend the voluntary restriction.

Mr. Gibbons asked for an update regarding the status on water pumped from Fredericksburg. Mr. Critzer responded that once the tanks were filled back up the pumping was stopped around 9:00am Saturday, July 10th.

Mr. Gibbons asked if staff had information regarding the Urban Development Area (UDA) and Comp Plan. Mr. Allen responded staff does have a copy of the map that has the location of the UDAs on it. Mr. Allen stated the Planning Department informed him that there would be no net gain; the increase of demand in the UDA would be compensated by a decrease in demand outside of the UDA.

Following some discussion, Commission members requested the issue be added as an agenda item for discussion at the next meeting. Staff suggested asking a member of the Planning Department to provide a brief of the issue at the August meeting.

New Business:

Coal Landing Road Neighborhood Sewer Project – Mr. Allen reported that five petitions from homeowners

have been received for a neighborhood sewer project on Coal Landing Road. Mr. Allen provided background information on the logistics of the project and commented that staff recommends the Commission schedule a public hearing to solicit comments from the public regarding this application.

Following an overview of the Neighborhood Extension Policy, commission members discussed the criteria for neighborhood projects and the cost of the sewer project. After the discussion, Mr. Tignor made a motion that staff send a letter out requesting a response from each resident that could be served by the Coal Landing Road Neighborhood Sewer Project prior to holding a public hearing. The motion was seconded by Danny Kim and passed unanimously.

Water Conservation Rate – Mr. Critzer reported at the July 6th Board of Supervisors meeting, the Board referred the issue of the water conservation rate to the Utilities Commission for further evaluation and recommendation. The Board would like to have the Commission's recommendation at its August 17th meeting. The Board is concerned that the conservation rate is seriously impacting water customers with newly-sodded lawns which have to be watered frequently. The Board adopted ordinance O10-41 which temporarily suspends the water conservation rate of \$23.55 for 60 days and applies the \$13.00 non-residential water usage to all residential water usage of 26,000 gallons or more.

Commission members discussed the impact the water conservation rate has had on water usage, and the number of customers affected by the rate. Following the discussion, Mr. Apicella made a motion to keep the water conservation rate at \$23.55 but provide a mechanism to give relief on a short term basis to customers who have to sod their lawns in compliance with the erosion control requirements established by the County. The motion was seconded by Mr. Tignor and passed with a 5-1 vote. Mr. Kim was the opposing vote.

Mr. Apicella commented that some supervisors have expressed concern about the effective date of the rate increase and he would like clarification regarding the effective date of the rate increase. Mr. Critzer responded the Board adopted O10-30 with an effective date for bills issued July 1, 2010. Mr. Critzer explained that if a bill was mailed out July 1st for water usage in June, that bill would be calculated using the new rates. The ordinance date would have to have been effective August 1, 2010 in order for it to apply to usage in July.

Mr. Gibbons made a motion that staff should draft a letter to thank Susan Fitzgibbon for her service to the Utilities Commission. The motion was seconded by Steven Apicella and passed unanimously.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

William C. Tignor,
Recording Secretary